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ABSTRACT

Designed to assist women attending Houston Community College (HCC) through periods of transition in their lives, this resource manual provides exercises and offers information related to retraining, self-assessment, and career redirection to help women find fulfilling careers. First, background is provided on HCC's Women's Support Services, an office devoted to programs that provide practical information, useful tips about the job market, opportunities to network with other women, and services, including career counseling, job placement, limited child care, some financial assistance, and a variety of conferences, tours, and seminars. The remaining chapters in the resource manual deal with: (1) career planning, including exercises on goal setting, decision making, and the influences of others on career choices; (2) the job search, including suggestions for developing a network of personal contacts to make the job-hunting process easier and more fruitful, tips on overcoming the loss of a job, information on writing a resume, and suggestions for preparing for an interview; (3) study skills, which recommends good study habits, offers guidelines on taking notes, time management, reading, and preparing for and taking tests; and (4) emotional survival skills, which provides tips on being assertive, using imaging to achieve personal goals, overcoming depression, coping with stress, recognizing patterns of co-dependency, and assessing and increasing self-esteem. (AJL)

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ED301235

Women's Support Services

A Resource Manual for the Woman In Transition

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About Women's Support Services

Houston Community College is deeply committed to assisting women in their efforts to "improve their lot in life." Usually this means returning to college to gain an education, learn a new skill, and to develop one's abilities as well as gain a strong sense of self-confidence. Women's Support Services is designed to fulfill this commitment to the women of Houston. The staff is composed of professional women who develop programs that provide practical information, useful tips about the job market, opportunities to network with other women, and comprehensive services that include: career counseling, job placement, child care (limited), financial assistance (limited), and an interesting diversity of conferences, tours, and seminars. We are proud that Houston women are beginning to turn an important corner in their lives!

The Women's Support Services department began in 1983 and has expanded rapidly during the past five years. The department has grown from serving 300 women in 1983 to 5,700 in 1988. Women have participated in a wide range of activities that have provided enrichment, encouragement, and a heightened awareness of their potential.

In 1987 Women's Support Services introduced the Women in Transition program. The purpose was to create a special environment of support for women enrolled in college who are in the midst of making significant changes in their lives. This period of transition often arrives through the trauma of divorce, unemployment, financial loss, etc. Many women find that they need special assistance during this time, particularly with retraining, re-assessment, and redirection. Assistance is provided through career counseling, career assessment, enrollment in two or three courses, weekly support groups, special seminars, child care, and tours of programs that offer viable career opportunities and job placement.

Women's Support Services has a prestigious and committed advisory board composed of professional women who are community leaders. The board provides guidance and direction to the program.

Maya Durnovo, Director
July, 1988

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Introduction

The purpose of this manual is to help you in your journey to find a fulfilling career. The information, exercises, and references in this manual are merely a starting point in your quest. Identifying a new career takes time, research, and some "soul searching." We urge you to talk to people who you feel have interesting careers and to also explore the resources in your city.

We have assembled some of the most useful "tips" that have been valuable to our women over the past few years. As you participate in our workshops, you will receive additional information.

Career Planning: The first chapter introduces you to the many facets of identifying a career. A successful career must meet your personal needs, values, interests, talents, and educational background. Career planning is a *process* that entails change and re-focusing as well as gathering all the information you need!

Job Search: The second chapter contains suggestions for writing a terrific resume, preparing for the interview, and then "selling yourself." The task of finding a job is not easy but certainly rewarding when you find yourself in an enjoyable setting with work that is challenging and fulfilling.

Study Skills: Studying is not a favorite pastime for most of us...however, the task is made easier if you follow some simple, yet practical hints on study habits. Good habits will help you become successful not only as a student but also on the job!

Emotional Survival Skills: If you find yourself feeling "blue" or "lethargic" or confused, turn to this section. Most of us need assistance with "imaging a fuller life" or handling stress. The areas covered in this section will be explored more fully through the WSS seminars offered each semester.

Resources: Several lists are provided to help with other services available in Houston.

Career Planning

Goal Setting

Accomplishing Your Goal

Ask yourself: What would I like to do by the end of next year? The end of three years? The end of five years? Once you have decided on one area of interest, use the following guidelines:

1. Goal:

2. Purpose:

3. Time limit:

4. Preliminary steps:

   A.

   B.

   C.

   D.

5. Major procedures:

A. Ask for information, advice, and specific help from anyone you know. Get information from library publications. Subscribe to publications which deal with your area of interest.

B. Write your own words, thoughts, and plans on paper! Actions will then seem easier.

Decision-Making Process

Situations requiring decision-making skills are common. People cannot avoid facing problems or decisions; however, they can learn more effective methods of dealing with them. The following process can be beneficial to decision-making and problem-solving.

1. Define your concern.

2. Gather information:

   a.

   b.

3. Generate alternatives.

4. Explore alternatives.

5. Make your decision.

6. Review your decision.

After decision-making, plan and implement:

1. Plan to reach your goals.

2. Implement your plan.

Influence of Others

People's choices are influenced by family, friends, and others. This influence can be through positive or negative examples. The influence can be direct such as advice or financial pressure, or subtle such as encouragement or criticism. Other people can influence your thinking through the models of their lives. In order to consider these influences on your career planning, it will be helpful to be aware of them.

1. Evaluate the effect the following people have had on your career thinking. Use this scale: Strong Positive (SP), Positive (P), None (0), Negative (N), Strong Negative (SN).

_____ Mother	_____ Teacher(s)	_____ Others
_____ Father	_____ Clergy	
_____ Brother(s)	_____ Counselor(s)	
_____ Sister(s)	_____ Professor(s)	
_____ Relative(s)	_____ Spouse	
_____ Friends	_____ Public Figure(s)	

2. Who has been *most* influential on your career planning? How?

3. What types of careers would your family want you to have? What's your reaction?

4. What types of careers would your friends think appropriate for you? (If you don't know, ask them!) What's your reaction?

5. With whom do you talk about your career planning? (e.g., your family, friends, or role models)

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U.S. Occupational Outlook Handbook—see your local library.

Job Search

Hidden Job Market

There are many ways to find a job. However, one of the best ways is through personal contact. Review the general contacts below. They may help you to identify individuals who can assist you in your job search.

General Contacts: Business associates, personal friends, parents, relatives, friends of the family, parents of your friends, neighbors, church members, club contacts, professors/teachers, school administrators, alumni (both high school & college), past/present employers, professional associations, search firms, state employment agency.

Work the Hidden Marketplace

Develop a network: The word network is a widely used term in the job-hunting process. A network is a group of people—personal contacts—that represent a communication system that can direct you toward job leads. Research has shown that approximately 50-60% of all successful job searches involved a personal contact. However, like everything else, the technique is only as good as the person implementing it. Developing an effective network means identifying resources, initiating contacts, selling, instructing, and maintaining an *active* personal connection with people.

Identify Your Network

Collect business cards continuously from all the people you meet. You can never have enough contacts. Then:

- Approach people with confidence, a career goal, and a plan of action to keep your name in their minds. It sells you and makes your contacts feel more comfortable.
- Identify those people closest to you and call them. *Tell them about your career goal and your qualifications.* Ask if they know of any job openings that match your qualifications and your goals. Tell them you'll send them a copy of your resume.
- Send the persons you called a follow-up letter thanking them for their help and stating your needs. Include a copy of your resume. Send a different letter to people in your network who are not close friends, but merely acquaintances. This letter appraises the reader of your job search.
- Make a list of companies you want to contact. Ask your resources (those who received the aforementioned letters) to supply names of any contacts within those companies.
- Encourage friends to "brainstorm" with you for possible leads.
- Call back to report your results to your "network" and update your company list.
- Assist others in their search for jobs!

Job Loss:
Twelve Tips to Overcome the Crisis

1. Make no decisions which will cause any more changes until you have had a chance to gain perspective.

2. Talk to people whom you trust and respect about your situation—this is not the time to be alone.

3. Talk with your family about your concerns and let them know this affects everyone; they may need to accept responsibilities to help.

4. Analyze your family spending patterns. If there are things you can do without, cut them from your budget immediately.

5. Write out a budget.

6. Contact creditors in writing and explain your situation. Tell them what you are able to pay (even if it is only a few dollars).

7. Spend time each day looking at the positives in your life...there are always some.

8. Start looking immediately for sources of income. Contact your local Texas Employment Commission about filing a claim for unemployment insurance.

9. A Texas Employment Commission counselor may be able to suggest other income sources such as food stamps, medicaid, and/or AFDC benefits.

10. Remember not to measure your total self-worth in terms of this situation.

11. Your job search should include your local newspaper want ads, college placement centers and private employment agencies. Also, ask friends and neighbors about possible job openings. Contact your local Texas Employment Commission for free placement services.

12. If you or another member of your family feels unable to cope with the pressure, seek out a counselor for professional help. Counseling is available for those on a limited income through the Mental Health Association listed in your phone book.

Resumé

A resumé is a written inventory of a person's professional background, career, and general qualifications slanted to the job sought. It should be one page in length (two at the most). Each word should carry full meaning and each sentence should be concise without unnecessary technical jargon and confusing construction. However, the resumé should reflect a knowledge of the target company's vocabulary—for example, a computer operator should use computer terminology.

- A resumé should *invite* the reader to interview the applicant.
- Use good quality paper, standard 8 1/2" X 11". The typeface should be clear and clean cut. Xerox copies are fine if they are sharp and crisp with no smudges.
- White and ivory colored paper looks very professional (don't use onionskin or carbon copies).
- The first person "I" should not be used.
- What to include:

  1. Career objective.
  2. Employment history: list employers beginning with the present position working your way back to your first job. The job description should be short, detailed, and written with power words (see list). Include dates and specific information.
  3. Educational credentials: list in chronological order, *beginning* with your most advanced degree.
  4. Professional activities.
  5. Honors, special qualifications, and skills.
  6. Military service.
  7. Community activities.
  8. References (should be typed on a separate page; do not list on the resume. Put "excellent references furnished upon request" on the last line of the resumé.)

- Emphasize your accomplishments and achievements.
- A photo should not be attached. Age, race, color, religion, marital status, children, and hobbies are *not* included.
- A cover letter should be sent with the resumé. The purpose is to indicate you are applying for the position and to include information that is not in the resumé--such as specific experience that relates to the job requirements. The cover letter is important and should reflect confidence in your abilities. The employer wants someone who can do the job, and you must sell yourself!

Power Verbs

Accomplished
Achieved
Acted
Adapted
Adjusted
Administered
Advanced
Advertised
Advised
Affected
Analyzed
Anticipated
Applied
Approached
Approved
Arranged
Assembled
Assessed
Assigned
Assisted
Attained
Authored
Automated
Budgeted
Built
Calculated
Cataloged
Chaired
Clarified
Coached
Collaborated
Communicated
Compared
Conceived
Conceptualized
Conciliated
Conducted
Consulted
Contained
Contracted
Controlled
Cooperated
Coordinated
Counseled
Created
Cut
Decided
Decreased
Defined
Delegated
Demonstrated
Designed
Detailed
Determined
Developed
Devised
Directed
Distributed
Drafted
Edited
Educated
Eliminated
Encouraged
Enlarged
Enlisted
Established
Estimated
Evaluated
Examined
Exchanged
Executed
Expanded
Expedited
Facilitated
Familiarized
Focused
Forecasted
Formulated
Fundraised
Generated
Governed
Guided
Handled
Head up
Hired
Identified
Implemented
Improved
Increased
Indexed
Influenced
Informed
Initiated
Innovated
Inspected
Installed
Instituted
Instructed
Integrated
Interpreted
Interviewed
Introduced
Investigated
Invented
Lead
Led
Maintained
Managed
Manipulated
Marketed
Mediated
Merchandised
Moderated
Modified
Monitored
Motivated
Negotiated
Obtained
Operated
Organized
Originated
Participated
Perceived
Performed
Persuaded
Planned
Presented
Prepared
Presided
Problem solved
Processed
Produced
Promoted
Proposed
Provided
Publicized
Published
Recommended
Reconciled
Recorded
Recruited
Rectified
Related
Renewed
Reported
Represented
Researched
Reduced
Resolved
Restructured
Reversed
Reviewed
Revised
Saved
Scanned
Scheduled
Screened
Selected
Served
Solved
Spoke
Staffed
Standardized
Stimulated
Streamlined
Summarized
Supervised
Surveyed
Synthesized
Systematized
Taught
Team built
Trained
Transmitted
Trimmed
Updated
Utilized
Wrote

Interview Hints

- Know something about the company.
- Be prepared!
- Fill out your application neatly and completely.
- Be on time.
- Dress professionally (a suit or appropriate dress).
- Use a strong, firm handshake.
- Know your interviewer's name.
- Maintain good eye contact.
- Be yourself.
- Do not use slang.
- Emphasize your goals and strong points.
- Do not ramble. Listen carefully.
- Be honest.
- Do not bring a friend or child to the interview.
- Be ready for unexpected questions.
- Be enthusiastic and smile.
- Let the interviewer guide the questions.
- Relate your skills and abilities to the job.
- Do not make negative remarks about past or present employers.
- Remember your body language "talks"!
- Act as if you want the job.
- Thank the interviewer and leave with a final handshake.
- Call back for the decision.
- Do not smoke or chew gum.

The Image of Success

Employment experts say that the typical interviewer makes his/her hiring decision in the first 30 seconds—and spends the rest of the interview looking for reasons to justify it. Here's how to make a winning impression:

1. **Arrive early**. Lateness will hurt your prospects with 70% of interviewers.

2. **Dress the part**. The best interviewing uniform is a dark suit with below-the-knee skirt; a light blouse; closed, freshly polished shoes; and an attache case. Keep makeup, jewelry, and perfume to a minimum, and style your hair conservatively.

3. **Bring documentation**. Instead of reporting about your work on the company newsletter, why not *show* her a copy or two? Reports you've written, performance reviews, academic certificates or transcripts can also be persuasive.

4. **Listen carefully**. Do not answer what you haven't been asked. Pay close attention to the *exact* wording of the question and keep your reply on target.

5. **Observe etiquette**. Even if invited to do so, do not smoke, eat, or drink during the interview. Address the interviewer as "Mr." or "Ms." unless you are invited to use his/her name. Never interrupt the interviewer or touch objects and papers on his/her desk.

6. **Project enthusiasm**. Without sounding too eager, you should convey a sense of excitement about the job. Make only positive remarks about yourself, your experience, and your previous employer. Use plenty of action words, such as improved, solved, developed, and originated.

7. **Ask for the job**. The right close for any sales pitch is to ask for the order—and a job interview is no exception. Ask when a decision will be made.

8. **Send a thank you note**. Use the note as another sales tool. Send the interviewer something extra such as a trade-journal article on a topic you discussed. Mention common interests that emerged during the interview or stress one or two of your best-selling points.

Side-Stepping Trouble

Are there any *negative* aspects to your work history that might hurt your employment prospects? To counter—and defuse—potential objections to your background, use some of these strategies.

- **You're lacking specific skills**. If task X wasn't part of your regular workload but you've done it a few times, describe this experience as "exposure to" the skills. If you have never done it but have learned about it through discussion or observation, say that you have "knowledge of it."

- **Your work history has gaps**. This will automatically raise interviewer's suspicions—but don't be defensive about it. The best explanations are that the job market was tight at that time or that you took time off to study, travel, or crystallize your career objectives. Emphasize that you used this time to grow as a person or you are now employed and overall, you have a stable employment history. If you were a homemaker or student, say so.

- **You've been fired**. Never lie, and don't knock your ex-boss or the company. Instead say something like, "Soon after I took the job, I realized that it was wrong for me, but I stuck it out in hopes of making a success of it. Unfortunately, things didn't work out and I was asked to leave. Now I have a much better understanding of what sort of position I'm interested in, which is why I'm so attracted to your company."

- **You're changing careers**. Emphasize the transferable skills you've developed and the aspects of your work most similar to the current position.

- **You've job-hopped**. This situation is difficult. The best way around it is to show that you were forced to change jobs by factors beyond your control—previous companies were moving, changing direction, or laying-off people. Assure interviewers that you are eager to make a long-term commitment to your next employer.

Your Questions to Ask

Is the position permanent?

Why is the person presently in the position leaving?

How soon does the job begin?

What are the work hours?

Does the company encourage employees to further their education?

What are the chances for advancement?

Who will the supervisor be?

What are the benefits? Vacation time?

When will a hiring decision be made?

Does the company provide for employee parking?

Note: Never mention salary until the company representative brings it up. Read the job description, if possible, to see if there is a posted salary range.

Study Skills

Study Habits

It is important to have a quiet place to study at home that is well-lighted and well-ventilated with a room temperature between 60-72 degrees. Try to sit at a desk in a straight chair *(that way you won't fall asleep!)*. Assemble all the equipment you will need at the desk before you start, such as pens, pencils, paper, textbooks, notes, dictionary, etc . Avoid interruptions and distractions by locating your study area in a secluded place. Avoid studying and reading in bed late into the night.

1. Set up a daily study schedule with an assigned time for each subject.
2. Plan on studying two hours for each hour of classroom lecture per week (six hours study time for a three semester hour class) and one hour of study for every one hour of lab.
3. Between study periods, take a 10-15 minute break and stand up, stretch, or take a short walk.
4. Before starting an assignment, review briefly the material covered during that week. Read your assignment carefully, then proceed with the lesson. Read each paragraph and try to select the topic sentence or summary sentence. At the end of a paragraph, summarize what you read in your own words.
5. Pay special attention to the first and last paragraphs in a chapter and the first and last sentences of each paragraph. Get in the habit of using the dictionary whenever you come upon an unfamiliar word.
6. Study by wholes rather than parts. Get the picture of the whole assignment or topic to see how much you can understand. Then go back and study in detail, section by section. Prepare each lesson without fail every day as assigned. Do not get behind in your work (this is easy to do!). Study alone.

Note-Taking

1. Use 8 1/2" X 11" loose leaf paper and a three ring binder.
2. Keep plenty of blank pages in the notebook.
3. Write on only one side of the paper.
4. Use a pen to take notes.
5. Develop speed shorthand codes, using circles, underlines, abbreviations, etc., for expressing main ideas and supporting materials.
6. Takes as few notes as necessary.
7. Review notes immediately after class and a second time on the week-end.

Time Management

To manage your time:

Set your goals and objectives.

Establish priorities.

Make a daily "To do list."

Rate daily activities in order of their importance to you.

Handle each piece of paper only once.

Try the Swiss cheese method: punch holes in big projects by finishing small tasks first.

Set deadlines.

Do it now!

To break a habit, remember the three R's:

- Repetition
- Reinforcement
- Reward

Time-Wasters:

Involving everyone	Routine tasks	Mistakes
Lack of organization	Failure to listen	Doing it myself
Attempting too much	Letting others do the job	Interruptions
Lack of priorities	Procrastination	Telephone
Blaming others	Outside activities	Snap decisions
Management by crisis	Personal attention/people	Visiting in office
Lack of organization	Poor communication skills	Unable to say "no"
Unorganized meetings	Unrealistic time estimates	Television

Reading

Reading is one of the most important factors of success in your college career. The average student will normally spend twice as much time reading as listening. The first step in developing good reading skills is understanding the material you are reading and recognizing the information to be gained.

In developing your reading skills, try to avoid reading syllable by syllable and word by word, pointing with your finger, saying words out loud, re-reading sections, and too many eye movements.

SQ4R Method

A popular method of developing reading skills is the SQ4R method, designed to give maximum comprehension and retention of the average college textbook.

SURVEY	Before reading, survey your assignment. Look through the material, determine its importance, and notice the title, introduction, headings, subtitles, and conclusion. Search for the main idea, the supporting ideas, and the most important details.
QUESTION	After your survey, ask yourself questions about the material. Coming up with questions is probably the most difficult task in this method. If the textbook has questions at the end of the chapter, use them. Questioning will give you a focus.
READ	Read the assignment and answer your questions as you go using top speed and efficiency. Also, read for comprehension and note-taking.
RECITE	After finding the answers to your questions, recite them. Do this by turning away from book notes and asking yourself the questions. Answer the questions.
WRITE	After reciting the answers to the questions, write them in your notes.
REVIEW	Review by answering the questions, not by rereading all the material.

Testing

There are two requirements for successful testing. The first is knowing the material and being able to answer the questions; the second is being able to demonstrate your knowledge. Being able to relate what you have learned to practical situations or events will help eliminate some causes of test anxiety. In a sense, it is not only necessary to know the content of the course, but to know that you know it. Self-testing by recitation and review is a rehearsal for the final act.

Dealing with the Exam

Do not try to lump all your studying into one or two intensive sessions before the exam. Distribute your review periods evenly through the preceding week. Continual review of the same material during the hours preceding the exam will only confuse you. Give your brain time to work for you rather than against you. Cramming material all night causes anxiety, frustration, and tension before and during the test. Using drugs (speed) to stay awake is no good either, for you will often crash before you ever take the exam!

Finals week is a time for being at your peak emotionally, physically, and psychologically and not a time for running your body down. Continue your daily habits as usual. Too much or too little sleep changes your physiological functioning so that you are "not yourself."

Test Anxiety

Demonstrating one's knowledge is another problem. Many students experience the problem of "clutching" or "test anxiety" during the exam. Others have difficulty with recalling many answers *after* they turn in their exams.

1. Carry your notebook to class but don't open it. It may provide you with a feeling of security because you could check on material before the test, but your ability to avoid looking in it may increase your confidence.

2. Panic is contagious. Stay away from other students. Do not rely on a friend's knowledge to help you. You may learn from him, but he will not take the test for you. Sometimes study groups are useful, i.e., study groups often help if they are task-oriented and not socially-oriented.

3. Admit you will not know all the answers. Self-confidence is a positive view of yourself.

4. The ability to "read" your professor may be gained from remembering critical points of emphasis in lectures, films, review sessions, and the types of past examinations.

5. Jot down important facts, names, and dates as you test.

6. Use all the time allowed. Do not get frustrated and walk out.

7. Review the material several times rather than in one intensive cram session.

8. Get plenty of sleep before the test and eat nutritious foods.

9. Arrive early and avoid rushing in at the last minute.

Types of Exams

There are two main types of examinations: subjective or essay exams and objective or short answer exams.

The Essay Exam

This exam requires a demonstration of knowledge by writing short essays and supplying personal opinions. Before you start, read all the questions. Answers will come to mind immediately for some questions so write down key words, dates, listings, names, and examples. Setup a time schedule and budget your time in relation to the point value of each question.

1. Do the easy questions first.
2. Make sure you understand each question before answering it.
3. Write legibly.
4. Outline before writing. Simplify your answer by numbering supporting ideas and by editing for compactness, completeness, and clarity.
5. Write an introduction and summary for each question.
6. Take time to reread your answers. Avoid misspelled words, omitted words, parts of words, and missing parts of complex questions.
7. Qualify your answer when in doubt. Rather than dealing with specific dates or facts, write "Toward the end of the 19th Century" rather than "In 1884" if you are not sure of the date.

Objective Exam

This exam is made of multiple-choice, true-false, matching, and short answer questions. Read through the questions once carefully, answering the obvious ones. For more difficult ones, write your first reaction in the margin and circle the number. As you go through the exam, later items will be useful in answering earlier ones. Also, first reactions tend to be correct ones. Go back through the test and work on the difficult questions.

1. Use all your time. Stay until you are sure you have given 100%!
2. Be your own judge about changing answers.
3. If you do not know the answer, GUESS.
4. When answering a multiple choice question, try to recall the answer before looking at the choices given.
5. Qualifying words like "usually" or "sometimes" make choices correct.
6. A choice that has the words "always" or "never" is usually wrong.
7. On multiple choice tests, the answer that is the most different, shorter or longer, is usually the correct answer.

Reference

Smith, Donald E. P., et. al., *Learning to Learn*, Harcourt, Brace and World Publishers.

Emotional Survival Skills

A Bill of Assertive Rights

1. You have the right to judge your own behavior, thoughts, and emotions and to take the responsibility for their initiation and consequences.
2. You have the right to offer no reasons or excuses for justifying your behavior.
3. You have the right to judge if you are responsible for finding solutions to other people's problems.
4. You have the right to change your mind.
5. You have the right to make mistakes—and be responsible for them.
6. You have the right to say, "I don't know."
7. You have the right to be independent of the goodwill of others before coping with them.
8. You have the right to be illogical in making decisions.
9. You have the right to say, "I don't understand."
10. You have the right to say, "I don't care."

You have the right to say no without feeling guilty.

From: When I Say No, I Feel Guilty by Manuel J. Smith, Ph.D.

Imaging for a Fuller Life

Make a tape of the following or read it aloud to yourself daily for several months. Be sure that your body is as relaxed as possible before you begin. You can add music if you wish. As you repeat the following, bring as many of your senses into the process as you can—see, hear, touch, smell, taste, and sense the meaning of the words.

1. I will be harmonious and whole.
2. I am choosing to engage in patterns and new ways of being that will heal and make me whole.
3. I am choosing a path that may not always be easy, but one I will find the courage and strength to pursue.
4. I am bringing laughter and enthusiasm to my intentionality for healing and wholing.
5. I am choosing to be in a process that extends my physical health and strength.
6. I am choosing to understand rather than judge or blame in my relationships.
7. I am recognizing the ways in which I protect myself from deeply knowing and loving others.
8. I am recognizing the ways in which I protect myself from others knowing me.
9. I am experiencing my mind clearing and sharpening.
10. I am experiencing myself becoming more creative.
11. I find that I am increasingly able to recall my dreams.
12. I am experiencing a greater sense of energy and freedom.
13. I am finding more pleasure in living.
14. I am experiencing more and more of that which I value in myself and others.
15. I feel increasingly beautiful, strong, clear, forgiving, and loving.
16. I have entered a process of growth and unfolding that will always be with me.

You may wish to add or delete words or perhaps rewrite the whole experience, substituting your own particular goals. Just keep in mind that you can't lie to your brain. Your intentions have to be reasonable. You also can't tell yourself that you already are all of these things.

Depression

Depressed women often don't have enough pleasure in their lives. They are too busy doing what they think they *should* be doing. *Look at this list and check things you enjoy* . Add as many items of your own. Don't rush this part! Let your list get as long and as detailed as you wish. You may find that your work on this section will take on a life of its own as one thought may lead to another.

Listening to music

Making music

Sewing

Cooking

Decorating

Selling

Working on projects alone

Working on projects with someone

Attending classes

Reading

Working with handcrafts

Reading periodicals

Gardening

Babysitting

Political action

Community work

Acting

Singing

Crochet/knitting/cross-stitch

Teaching skills that you know

Swimming

Exploring

Travelling

Writing down thoughts

Cleaning house

Discussing books

Seeing movies

Church activities

Visiting museums

Learning about art

Sports

Birdwatching

Jogging or walking

Aerobics or exercise routine

Dancing

Charity work

Redecorating the home

Visiting the library

Working with elderly people

Working with children

Making money with odd jobs

Being with friends

Stress Skills

There are at least four strategies for attacking troublesome stressors.

1. You can reorganize and take control of the way you spend your time and energy.
2. You can manage your environment by controlling what and who is surrounding you. In this way, you can either get rid of stressors or get some support for yourself.
3. You can change your attitude toward your stressors.
4. You can build your strength and endurance so that physically you are able to stand up against the stressors.

Strategy #1: Organize Yourself

You can manage your stress by controlling the way you spend your time and energy and develop better methods for managing yourself. You can utilize the skills of:

- Pacing: The art of controlling tempo.
- Valuing: The art of choosing between alternatives and investing yourself in the right places.
- Time Use: The art of setting priorities and choosing how you spend your days, hours, and minutes.
- Commitment: The art of saying "yes" and investing in yourself.
- Personal Planning: The art of setting goals and making steady progress toward those goals.

Strategy #2: Change the Scene

You can manage your stress by controlling your environment, changing the way you relate to people, and thus manipulating your external world. You can utilize the skills of:

- Assertiveness: The art of saying "no" and actually choosing your own involvements.
- Fighting: The art of standing your ground and struggling to change what's around you.
- Listening: The art of empathy—carefully tuning into the feelings of others and understanding their feelings more fully .
- Contacting: The art of making friends and seeking out supportive relationships.
- Nest-Building: The art of setting up your environment house and turning it into a home.

Strategy #3: Change your Mind

Manage stress by taking control of your attitudes, beliefs, and values. This will enable you to review your situation and change your viewpoint. You can utilize the skills of: .

- Relabeling: The art of calling a spade a diamond in the rough and seeing a promise in every problem.
- Surrendering: The art of saying good-bye—of letting go and closing some doors.
- Faith: The art of accepting your limits and choosing beliefs which will help you deal with the mysterious and unknown in your world.
- Imagination: The art of creativity and laughter, stemming from the ability to form new combinations and to see the humor in the pieces of life that simply don't fit together.
- Whispering: The art of talking to yourself and giving yourself quiet, positive messages.

Strategy #4: Body-Building

Manage stress by building your stamina and resistance to successfully withstand the pressures of your situation. Then you can utilize the skills of:

- Exercising: The art of strengthening and fine tuning your body.
- Eating: The art of feeding your body the building materials it needs to maintain a strong and healthy physiological system.
- Gentleness: The art of wearing kid gloves and treating yourself kindly and softly—with care.
- Relaxation: The art of cruising in neutral and of replenishing your reserves through deep breathing, meditation, and prayer.
- Consistency: The art of building a consistent rhythm in your life so your body can anticipate and prepare for the efforts you desired.

Co-Dependence

Co-dependency is a dysfunctional pattern of living which emerges from one's *family of origin* and *culture*, characterized by an *over-reaction* to things *outside* of us and an *under-reaction* to things *inside* of us, all of which produces an arrested *identity* formation.

John Bradshaw

Co-Dependency Characteristics

1. You center your life around others and their activities.
2. You neglect your own needs— you may not even realize that you have needs.
3. Your life is a desperate search for approval.
4. You assume the guilt for poor relationships and the failure of relationships. You readily take the "blame" when things aren't working.
5. You attempt to be "perfect": the perfect mother, father, lover, friend, person.
6. You have difficulty with emotional intimacy—desire for it, strong avoidance of it, overwhelming fear of it—all simultaneously.
7. You attempt to control yet have a huge feeling of powerlessness.
8. You tend to "take care of" others—to enable them.
9. You have a psychological "fusion" with parenting figures.
10. Much "enmeshment" (poor identity boundaries) exists in your family of origin and other relationships.
11. You seek "security" in insecure relationships: feeling comfortable in uncomfortable relationships.
12. You and family members react out of habit rather than from conscious awareness, resulting in little or no actual growth.
13. You fear and avoid change and personal growth.
14. Your family members fear that they are unlovable and may begin to support this erroneous belief.

Self-Esteem

Characteristics of High Self-Esteem

Personal competence

Personal worth

Self-confidence

Self-respect

Positive self-image

Ability to make decisions

Assertiveness and non-aggressiveness

Willingness to take risks

Adventurous

No fear of showing affection

No need to control

Flexibility

Ability to focus on needs of others and self

Ability to express anger

Attends to physical and emotional needs

Characteristics of Low Self-Esteem

Fear of being alone

Feelings of self-contempt

Unhappy childhood

Poor self-image

Anxiety

Fear

Guilt

Loneliness

Ruled by emotions

Arrogance

Fear of change

Life out of control

Lack of self respect

Questions to Ask Yourself

1. If you only had six months to live, how would you change your life?
2. If you could live with anyone, whom would you choose?
3. Where would you live? With someone? Alone? Where?
4. If there were no mealtimes, how much would you eat?
5. How much sleep would be enough?
6. How much money would make you happy?
7. What would you do if there was no such thing as money?
8. How old would you be if you could change your age?
9. What kind of personality would you have if you could change?
10. Using single words and not phrases, how would you describe yourself?
11. What was the best time in your life? How old were you?
12. What makes you feel happy? Are you happy? What changes can you make that will make you feel happy and good about yourself?

Ways to Increase Self-Esteem

Set goals: What do you want? What do you want to be different? How can you get there? How will you know when you have reached your goal? What is a reasonable timeframe to reach your goal?

Give yourself credit for things you do well: "Toot your own horn!"

Take risks and be adventurous. What do you have to lose?

Be assertive; say what you want and state your feelings. What do you feel?

Take care of yourself physically (exercise and nutrition) and emotionally (be in touch with yourself and how you feel).

Do things you like to do. Act self-assured. Be proud of yourself.

Resource Guide

Alcoholism--Women

Recovering Women's Group
713/462-4000 Spring Shadows Glen

Twelve step recovery program for women who desire to stop drinking. Peer group only. No charge. Meets Monday 12 (noon) - 1:30 pm (babysitting provided).

Spring Shadows Glen
2801 Gessner
Houston, TX 77080

Women for Sobriety
713/520-1501

Small self-help groups to help women change their way of living through absolute and continued sobriety. Addresses women's needs in recovery. Focuses on identifying problems which lead to drinking and building self-esteem. Facilitated by a certified counselor. $2.00 contribution per meeting. Call for further or updated meeting locations.

Battered Women

Family Violence Support Group
Bridge Over Troubled Waters, Inc.
P.O. Box 3488
Pasadena, TX 77501
Administrative Off. 713/472-0753
713/473-2801 24 hour hotline

The group provides a safe place for abused women to share experiences, obtain information, and support one another. Must call for an appointment and an individual assessment. Call for meeting time and location. Professionally facilitated. No charge.

Bay Area: 18301-A Egret Bay Blvd.
Houston, TX 77058

Pasadena Area: 1027-A South Main
Pasadena, TX 77506

Supportive Outreach Services (S.O.S.)
Houston Area Women's Center
Four Chelsea
Houston, TX 77006
713/528-5785

Information, referral, support to adult victims of family violence and their children. Helps to strengthen parenting skills and provide information about abusive situations and ways to make choices in planning for the future. Services are provided in both English and Spanish. Professionally facilitated. Clients must be residents of Texas, over eighteen or married, the victim of violence or threats of violence by another member of the same household and not in immediate need of shelter. Call for an appointment. Child care provided. No charge.

S.O.S.
3600 Mt. Vernon
Houston, TX 77006

The Older Women's League
Houston Area Chapter
4 Chelsea
Houston, TX 77006
713/524-4434

Education, advocacy, and mutual self-help. Working together in good company we can help each other to plan better for the last of our adult lives. Monthly meetings. Call for meeting time and location.

Child Abuse--Women

Women Who Experienced Child Abuse or Neglect (We Can)

Family Service Center
4625 Lillian
Houston, TX 77007
713/861-4849 Liz Holmes

A therapeutic self-help group for women who experienced any kind of childhood abuse: physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual. No charge. Meets Monday, 7-8:30 pm.

Family Outreach of America, Inc.

713/665-0385
409/582-4130 Darline Hermann

Provides parenting skills groups in an atmosphere of trust and sharing for those who want to improve their parenting; a telephone "warm" line to aid in parent/child crises; trained volunteers to intervene in a crisis situation. Call for more information.

Co-Dependency

Co-Dependents Anonymous

713/623-4332 Center for Recovering Families

Twelve step program for people who are co-dependent or who experience dependency disorders. Co-dependency is a set of maladaptive, compulsive behaviors learned by family members in order to survive in a family which is experiencing great emotional pain and stress. Peer group only. Voluntary donations. Call for updated schedule of meeting times and location.

Divorce

Citizens Organized for Divorce Ethics and Solutions

713/932-8800 Joleen Reynolds
713/993-0136 Joyce

Support to people who have been "legally abused" in the divorce process to help them work through the trauma and deal with their anger. Professional speakers. No charge for group participation. $12 per year membership. Meets Wednesday at 7:30 pm.

St. Luke's United Methodist Church
3471 Westheimer
Houston, TX 77027

Beginning Anew

409/297-3041

A group of caring, sharing people creating an awareness of the needs of separated, divorced and remarried Christians and giving them a sense of belonging within the church community. Meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday at 8:15 pm.

St. Michael Parish
100 South Oak Drive
Lake Jackson, TX 77566

Beyond DWS

713/789-1250 Church

A support group for the divorced, separated, widowed and single, offering emotional support and spiritual growth in an atmosphere of friendship. Meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesday at 8:00 pm.

St. Cyril of Alexander
10503 Westheimer, Room 121
Houston, TX 77042

"Care and Share" Southeast Regional Support Group

713/481-6816 Church

Interdenominational support group for separated, divorced, widowed, or single people. Programs for educational, social, and self-awareness enhancement. Meets Thursday at 7:30 pm.

St. Luke the Evangelist Church
11011 Hall Road (Social Hall)
Houston, TX 77089

Insights North Region and Support Group
713/353-5053 Church

Provides spiritual, emotional and moral support to those experiencing the trauma of divorce, separation or death of a spouse and to encourage growth beyond the trauma. Meets on the 1st and 3rd Thursday at 7:30 pm.

St. James the Apostle Church
22880 Aldine Westfield
Spring, TX 77373

Let's Do It Again
713/672-0026 Church

Provides emotional, spiritual, and social support to anyone who is separated, widowed, or divorced (regardless of age) and singles over 35. Everyone is welcome. Meets 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 7:30 pm.

Our Mother of Mercy Church
4000 Sumpter St. (Father Balls Center)
Houston, TX 77020

Support Group for Single and Divorcing Individuals
713/944-6666 ext. 6700
Provides support for single and divorcing individuals. Facilitated by a psychologist. Free of charge. Meets Monday, 7:00 pm.

Pasadena Bayshore Medical Center
Doctor's Dining Room 1 (lower level)
4000 Spencer Hwy
Pasadena, TX 77504

Parenting--Mothers

LaLæche League
713/894-6952 Houston Central
409/737-2455 Galveston

Support and information for breastfeeding mothers and women interested in breastfeeding. (Babies welcome.) $25 annual membership fee includes bi-monthly journal. No charge for group attendance. Call for meeting times and locations.

Mothers Offering Mothers Support (MOMS)
713/524-3089 H.O.P.E

Support for stay-at-home moms. Informal recreational and educational meetings in different areas of Houston. Free of charge. Call for meeting time and location.

Mothers Needs (New Mothers) Group
2014 Bissonnet
Houston, TX 77005
713/526-2848 Mary Burnside

Provides emotional and group support for new mothers. Free of charge. Call for meeting time.

Mothers Support Group
1200 Northwood #2603
Baytown, TX 77521
713/422-0305 Jodie Arrington

Group of mothers who meet weekly to exchange ideas, explore feelings about mothering and offer understanding, encouragement, and support. Therapist facilitated. (Babysitting is provided.) $2.50 per meeting (1st meeting is free). Meets Friday 9 - 11 am.

Trinity Episcopal Church
2701 W. Main
Baytown, TX 77520

HOPE (Houston Organization for Parent Education)
2990 Richmond, Suite 240
Houston, TX 77098
713/524-3089

Childbirth preparation (Lamaze) classes, breastfeeding preparation and support, infant care classes, caesarean preparation, preparing for an adopted baby, family enrichment workshops, H.A.N.D. (Houston's Aid in Neonatal Death), P.O.P. (Parents of Prematures), M.O.M.S. (Mothers Offering Mothers Support), Caesarean Births Parents. Call for more information.

North Channel Mothers Offering Mothers Support (MOMS)

713/451-6036 Debbie
713/462-6753 Pam

Non-denominational group offering a place where mothers can join together to share experiences and provide support. Child care is available for a fee of $2 for 1 child and $2.50 for 2 or more children. The group meets Fridays 9:30 - 11 am.

Woodforest Presbyterian Church
13349 Woodforest Blvd.
Houston, TX 77015

Women's Group

Houston Child Guidance Center
18301 A Egret Bay Blvd.
Clear Lake, TX 77058
713/335-1646

Therapeutic support group for women who are parents. Addresses both women's issues and parenting issues. Call for interview (Request group participation). Sliding scale fee based on income (minimum of $50).

Parenting--Premature Infants

Parents of Prematures

713/524-3089 H.O.P.E

Support to parents with premature infants. Free of charge. Call for meeting times and locations.

Parenting--Single Parents

Single Mothers Alliance

713/526-3088 Cory Beaulieu

Support and social activities for single mothers and their kids. Meets 3rd Sunday at 2 pm at alternating houses (Children welcome). No charge.

Single Mothers by Choice

713/437-6274 day
713/266-3505 evening

Education and support for women who have chosen to be single mothers. Peer support; speakers. Voluntary donations. $20 fee for membership; not required to attend meetings. Babysitting provided. Meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesday at 7 pm.

St. Thomas More Church
10330 Hillcroft
Houston, TX 77096

Parents Without Partners

P.O. Box 12609
Houston, TX 77217-2609
713/472-5504

Social and support organization for single parents and their children. Members must be the parent of one living child and must be legally single. Orientation meeting and $25 annual membership are required. Call for more information.

Orientation Locations and Times:

Freeman Memorial Library
16602 Diana
Houston, TX 77062
Meets the 2nd Thursday at 7:30 pm.

Oak Forest Library
1349 West 43rd St
Houston,TX 77018
Meets the 2nd Saturday at 1:30 pm.

Pasadena Library
1201 Minerva at Southmore
Houston, TX 77056
Meets the 3rd Thursday at 7:30 pm.

Central Presbyterian Church
3788 Richmond
Houston, TX 77027
Meets the last Thursday at 7:30 pm.

Parenting--Troubled Children or Adolescents

Parent's Skills/Support Group
713/526-3232

Therapeutic group to help parents through support and information to become more effective parents. Utilizes "Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP)" model. Intake interview required. Sliding scale fee (minimum $5 per group). Meets Wednesday at 6 pm.

Houston Child Guidance Center
3214 Austin
Houston, TX 77004

Social Skills/Problem Solving Group
Houston Child Guidance Center
3214 Austin
Houston, TX 77004
713/526-3232

Separate therapeutic groups for children ages 15 to 18 and children 12 to 14 who are having problems at home or in school. Groups address developmental issues, "acting out", depression, interacting with peers, sexuality, drugs,and other issues appropriate for the age group. Call for intake interview and request group participation. Sliding scale fee based on income (minimum $50). Meets Thursday at 6 pm.

Teen/Care
713/488-1703 Dr. Trisha Gunn

Support group for teenagers; focuses on feelings, communications, and drug usage prevention. No charge. Meets Thursday 8-9 pm.

Wetcher Clinic
16902 El Camino Real, Suite 2 C
Houston, TX 77058

Unwed Parents Anonymous
713/721-1001

Twelve step program modeled after Alcoholics Anonymous for unwed mothers who have had children out of wedlock or who are currently pregnant. Also open to grandparents. Call for consultation and for meeting time and location. No charge.

Support Group for Unwed Mothers
713/955-1001

Information and support for unwed mothers whether they place their babies for adoption or decide to parent. Therapist attends. Free of charge. Meets Wednesday at 8 pm.

Premenstrual Syndrome

PMS Center
P.O. Box 1375
Humble, TX 77347
713/353-7100 Mary Darling, RN

Education and support for women who suffer from premenstrual syndrome. Call for more information.

PMS Center
22540 Aldine Westfield
Spring, TX 77347

Widows/Widowers

Chapter II
713/444-5319 M.K. Boettcher

Mutual support and social organization for widows and widowers. This group is not intended to provide support during the initial bereavement of a spouse. $12 per year membership includes monthly newsletter. Meets 4th Thursday at 7:30 pm. Call for information.

Northwoods Presbyterian
3320 FM 1960 West
Houston, TX 77068

Lifeline

713/464-5073 Dagmar Marchant
713/666-1323 Sam Gromatzky

Mutual support and social organization for widows and widowers. This group is not for the initial bereavement of a spouse but is intended to help the widow or widower find companionship, fun, and a place to belong with others who have been through the same experience. Free of charge. Meets 1st Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm.

Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church
11612 Memorial Drive (Corner of Blalock)
Houston, TX 77024

Drug Abuse Programs of America (DAPA)

DAPA Central Office
6565 DeMoss, Suite 114
Houston, TX 77074
713/995-8889

Programs offered to anyone, individual or family, who has a drug or alcohol abuse program and needs professional help. Staffed by counselors and therapists. Separate groups for adolescents (12-16), young adults (17-25), adults (25 +), and parents/spouse/significant others. The permanent centers are located in Southwest, North and Southeast Houston. Additional weekly meetings are held in Kingwood, Conroe, Alief and Ft. Bend areas. No charge. Call for information.

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